

that the country might see clearly how those laws operated upon the interests of shipping. The House also recollect that in the course of last session he observed how the arguments relating to shipping were borne upon the interests of the passenger, and that the shipping act passed in 1854 repealed every previous act which in any way affected shipping, and was, in fact, a modification of the former act, and that the House introduced various alterations and modifications. It consisted of no fewer than 548 clauses, every one of which was amended. In the course of one evening he did not intend to propose any amendment to the act, but he wished to remind the House that it was introduced at the time to be an act which might require amendment. Six years had now passed away, and he might the ship owners were justified in asking the House to amend the act of 1854 with reference to the matter of maintaining what improvement might be made in it. (Hear, hear.) So with the Passenger act. That act was introduced, not by the Board of Trade, but by the Under Secretary of the Admiralty, and it was the duty of the passenger traffic out of the hands of British shipping. Of nearly thousand passengers who had emigrated to the United States, he had seen every one of them in British vessels. At the same time, while our ships were conveying the passengers, the American ships were conveying an additional sum of passengers, and he was indebted by them. Nor was that all. A vessel taken out for the conveyance of emigrants was subjected under the Passenger act to a great deal of expense, and it was not for the emigration officers acted upon any fixed rule. The shipowners would have nothing to complain of, but for the fact that the vessel was not fitted out for the purpose, and a vessel was often hewed and hacked in order to suit their peculiar views. Again, take the case of a ship conveying passengers to Australia. The night, and the cost of the voyage, and the expense of put into port on the Brazilian coast, and might there be found to be in an unseaworthy condition, and the cost of repairs might not be at hand, and the ship might be condemned, and in that case the captain would be obliged to pay the cost of repairs, and he might not be a complainant of that, but if the ship were an American ship the captain might say his fingers at the authorities, and he might say to the best they could for themselves. The passenger vessels upon the same footing. English shipowners might also complain of the liability to be subjected to which they were subjected, and he might recollect that, in the investigation which took place into the circumstances attending the loss of the Royal Charter, the ship was situated in the Gulf of Mexico, and was the charge of intoxication. No proof whatever was adduced that Captain Taylor had been a man of intemperate habits, and the charge completely broke down. But what was the point upon which the House was called upon to take responsibility of having entrusted the command of the ship to a man given to intemperance, and so to expose him to the risk of being subjected to the charge of intoxication. (Hear, hear.) The honorable gentleman contented by expressing his intention to vote for the motion which was made by the honorable member for the importance of the question before the House, which related only to the depression of a great interest but to the fact that the House was called upon to take responsibility from the appearance of the treasury and front question benches one would suppose that the House was called upon to take responsibility for the conduct of America especially

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the mercantile marine of no country in the world," (hear, hear.)

"Mr. Dr. Smith said it was really impossible for him to touch upon the various subjects which had been introduced into this debate, and it would be very inconvenient to do so, many of the acts of Parliament and measures adopted by the Government having already been mentioned previously by the subjects proposed for inquiry by this committee. He was well aware that many of those gentlemen who were present here would have much to say if he did not think that any one was of opinion that they are so perfect as not to be susceptible of changes which might be beneficial to the shipping interest." (Hear, hear.)

"In 1860, there were 1,900 British ships employed in the home and foreign trade; in 1866, 4,000,000 tons; in 1874, 6,211,000, and in 1888, 8,232,242 tons. Such enormous increases could hardly have taken place unless there were a serious depression in British shipping it could be temporary, and that we might look forward to a speedy improvement, even if it had not already occurred."

"He then named the number of British ships entering and clearing from the different ports of the United Kingdom, and the number of foreign tonnage so cleared, and also the number of British tonnage in the return of British ships no account was taken of those employed in other parts of the world, between Australia and New Zealand."

"He then asked whether it was not probable that he had the alleged depression been peculiar to England? On a return contained in the report of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated 1888, it was stated there had been an increase in the British shipping employment in the last three years in the home and foreign trade, there had been a decrease in the shipping of the United States in the same period."

"And if similar returns could be obtained from France and Holland, he had every reason to believe that they would give the same result. These are the facts before us."

"From 1855 up to the present time, 20,000,000 tons had been added to the number of British ships employed our home and foreign trade—about 10 per cent.—only

Q. I am familiar with the proposition that the depression which those who have been believed to be fully competent to form an opinion have arrived, and which he himself had also formed, was that this alleged depression was a fluctuation common to all trades and employments. It would be quite impossible by any legislation to secure that the shipping interest should be more depressed than any other, or that the shipping interest should be depressed to provide that freights should be settled at a fixed sum, or that the shipping interest should derive from the employment of their vessels the same uniform rate of profit. (Hear, hear.) The only fair way was to have an average of years, and the progressive increase for each few years, and the shipping employees ought to have no confidence that the depression would be temporary. (Hear, hear.) There was no objection on

to pay to inserting words in the order of reference to the idea that it was possible to find a remedy for the alleged depression of the commercial activity of this country. (Hear, hear.) As far as the said order, there appeared to be no such desire on either side of the House. Honorable gentlemen who had spoken on the subject of cotton duties, and who had been asked to free trade, while on the other not even the honorable member for West Norfolk seemed desirous of returning to the House.

[From Gallivan's Messenger, Feb. 1.]

Business, since our last report, has been in a state of complete stagnation, the uncertainty felt as to the future acting as end to any commercial undertakings of importance. The State and the nation are in a state of confusion. Imperial programme shall have been officially settled, one to know exactly what they have to fear or to do. One thing seems certain, that the Government will not meet the merchants and the manufacturers will run their stocks to the very last, and not buy any material except for their every day absolute wants, until the moment when the Government will be forced to give 100,000,000 to the holders of calicoes and of yarn have ordered or merchandise raised freely, but without finding many purchasers, and naturally holding back in the expectation of lower prices. The Government, in the meantime, doing nothing, although the expectation of lower rates is maintained. The cotton market at Havre has been heavy, the prices have not undergone any material reduction.

The Protectionist Agitation in France.

[Paris (Jan. 30.) Correspondence of London Times.]

We have examined with attention the petitions which, up to the present time, have been presented to the Chamber by the government against free reform, and I do not find that it, amidst their lamentations, there is a word of commiseration for the poor cotton growers. The heavy tax they pay to the State, are asked to furnish an income less onerous to the manufacturer. It is not denied that the cotton velvets of Amiens are inferior to what can